

Goodwin's Weekly.

VOL. II.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, DECEMBER 20, 1902.

No. 6.

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PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

Subscription Price { \$2.00 per Year
1.25 for 6 Months } in Advance.

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P. O. Boxes 1074 and 1020.

Phone 301.

217-230-231 COMMERCIAL CLUB BLDG., - SALT LAKE CITY

CHRISTMAS.

Christmas carols are already ringing on the air; Christmas bells will be ringing soon; children are all expectancy and whether Santa Claus comes with the traditional reindeers and sleigh or with a celestial automobile, it will be all the same to them, so that his stock for 1902 is inexhaustible. The Christmas of ancient days was the feast day for the harvest that had come and disarmed the winter of its terrors. The Christmas of Christian countries is a time of double rejoicing, rejoicing for the harvest that makes sufficient the winter's food, rejoicing because it marks the signal station that was set up nineteen hundred years ago bearing to mankind the promise of redemption and everlasting peace. Hence Christians hail it with the gratitude and joy which becomes a day so auspicious of peace and hope. In the cathedrals its coming is greeted with ringing bells, with all the pomp and solemnity of organ and choir, of robed priests, of swinging censurs, incense and praise and prayer. In the homes of the people are the babblings of children's voices which may be ascend higher than the organ roll and the singing in the churches, for no mediator can come nearer catching God's ear than the voice of a child. There is feasting and merriment for "joy to the world, the Lord is come," and Christmas day symbols that day toward which men look forward to when Peace shall be the rule and when Care and Sorrow shall have been driven away. It is right on Christmas day to rejoice, right to put care aside, right for the earth to be glad, for around it centers all there is of hope for this world and the world to come.

It is right for neighbor to greet neighbor in all friendship and heartiness; it is right to fill children's hearts with gratitude to Santa Claus, for when more years come to teach the children that the saint is a myth, the gratitude will not be lost; it will only be changed to the real Santa Claus, parents and friends; it will expend into love of home and love of home when perfected culminates in love of country and boys so reared are worthy to become soldiers, girls so reared are worthy to become the mothers of soldiers.

The day is so sacred that anything rude or coarse grates upon it; self-respect should cause all men to respect the day, to make it a joyous Sabbath.

Again there is nothing that will so sweeten its hours in the thoughts of men as to know that they have been true to it; that no poor neighbor has been neglected; that there is no child near who has been denied a gift; that there is no home near

so poor, that above it there is a break in the carols that are being sung.

Those carols are continuations of the echoes that rang back from the ether. "Glory to God in the highest and on earth to man Peace and Good Will" because the Lord was born, and they should on Christmas day swell in louder and louder volume until the angels come again to join in the immortal song and to repeat—

THE CHRISTMAS STORY.

While lowly shepherds watched their flocks by night;

God's angel came and—panoplied in glory
That filled the world with a celestial light—
Announced—O wondrous story—

That in a manger rude in Bethlehem old,
Unto an earthly mother had been given
The child, by seers and prophets long foretold—
The Lord of earth and heaven.

The story of those shepherds, by their sheep
And what they saw and heard has thrilled the
ages;
For history holds no other half so deep
In all its sacred pages.

Uncouth those shepherds were, but gentle souled,
Nothing they knew of learning's higher missions,
Their thoughts were bounded by the rude sheep-
fold
And by their race traditions.

They talked, and told maybe, of their great King,
How in his youth his fathers' sheep he tended,
And how against the furious lion's spring
The boy his flock defended]

Maybe they marveled as the tale was told
Which had survived a thousand years of telling;
And gave their version that in days of old
Giants on earth were dwelling.

Maybe they told how Pharaoh's host was drowned,
Of Moses' wisdom or of Miriam's singing,
Of men inspired who, mightily renowned,
Had kept their history ringing.

With deeds that shook the world, with thoughts
sublime,
A history marvelous, a chosen nation,
Watched over, cared for by the power divine,
The elect of all creation.

The night was still, the young moon had gone
down,
Through clouds like white-winged birds the stars
were sailing;
On earth and air the midnight's heavy frown
Was drawn—a sable veiling.

At last one shepherd raised his heavy eyes,
When lo, a new star in the east was blazing;
Startled and trembling in a vast surprise
At something so amazing

He cried, "O, see! In the pale east the night
Has taken on a new unnatural glory!
What is the portent of that wondrous light,
Above our hill-tops hoary?"

Then on those watchers fell a mighty fear,
For the bright star forsook the east, and sailing
Above them shone so radiant and so near,
The bravest heart was failing.

When through the night a voice came sweet and
clear,

"Fear not, for lo! glad tidings we are bringing;
The Lord is born, O! earth be of good cheer,
The heavenly host is singing

The Lord is born!" Thus did the herald cry:

Like a grand anthem swelled the mighty rhythm,
"On earth be peace, and to the God on high,
Hosannahs!" God in heaven

Did ever such a message come before?

Peace and to man good will," that was the greet-
ing;

The air was thrilled and from the mountains hoar,
Echoes rolled back repeating

The tones august "Peace and to man good will"
In full acclaim: While on the bare ground kneel-
ing,

The trembling shepherds heard rare music swell
Like solemn great bells pealing.

Mighty in melody, a glorious strain;
A stately paeon rising, falling, swelling;
A triumph song, and in its deep refrain
The Savior's coming telling.

And then the bright star ceased its onward way,
And o'er a lowly manger hung in glory,
The lowly manger where the young child lay.
That is the wondrous story.

It has a lesson to the sons of men,
Aside from its enchantment and its splendor;
It is a symbol beautiful, that when
We faithful service render,

And falter not, the books are kept above,
And credit for each honest effort given,
And it comes back in peace, good will and love,
And makes of earth a heaven!

MRS. GRANT.

The wife of the great Grant has gone to join
her illustrious soldier husband on the still camp-
ing ground in the Beyond. Their long march is
over; no longer sunrise or sunset gun, no longer
reveille or taps. Their last campaign is finished.

Fifty-four years ago she joined his command
and took up her march by his side. For thirty-
seven years she was his most distinguished aide;
for seventeen years since he was retired she has
waited to receive her honorable discharge. It has
come now and with it a delicious peace.

That she was worthy of her soldier is enough
to say. No star grew upon his heroic breast that
was not reflected on her own. No honor came to
him that she did not reflect and in honor wear.

In every sphere, wife, mother, friend, neigh-
bor, "the first Lady in the land," she moved as
perfectly became a true, high-souled, patriotic
American woman. In the long ago she married
her captain, and the rhythm in her soul from that
hour until she sank into her final sleep, set to
words, would have been, "Captain, my Captain."

Open the massive doors that bar the entrance
to that tomb on the highlands above the Hudson!
Make room for another sleeper there beside "her
Captain." America has nowhere a more hallowed
spot, nowhere more illustrious dead.